

DEVON-AIRE SOFTBALL LEAGUE

May 2015 Rules and Regulations

Mission Statement

Devon-Aire Softball is a non-profit organization for the purpose of teaching young people the fundamentals of playing softball. The major emphasis is not the winning of games, but rather to instruct and to have fun. All games are to be played according to ASA Rules with certain exceptions as outlined in the Devon-Aire By-Laws. There is no discrimination in this league with regard to race or ethnic background.

All monies received, either through sponsors or registration, are to be used for the purpose of the Devon-Aire Softball League. They will be spent on equipment, trophies, Sponsor plaques, uniforms and field maintenance. The remainder will be used for the end-of-the-year picnic, and any surplus will be returned to the general fund.

1.0 Safety

- 1.1 The coaches shall not be held responsible for any injury; but will look after the injured. All injuries must be reported immediately after the occurrence to the parents of the injured player.
- 1.15 Per Michigan Law, all players must have concussion awareness forms signed and on file for all players before the first game. Managers and Coaches will view online materials for awareness.
- 1.2 No steel spikes on shoes allowed. No sandals or bare feet will be permitted. Shirts must be worn, as issued.
- 1.3 Catcher must wear proper equipment: helmet, mask, and chest protector at a minimum.
- 1.4 Any player who throws his/her bat (an uncontrolled release) will be warned the first time, and both coaches notified. On any subsequent occurrence, the batter will be called out. Runner(s) may not advance. The umpire must notify both managers of the warning. This rule will be in effect for the first three games of each season. Starting in game four, any uncontrolled release of the bat will result in the batter being called out, without prior warning.
- 1.5 There are no take-outs allowed at any base. A runner must slide or give him/herself up, or the runner is called out. In a force situation, where the lead runner is involved in the take-out, both the runner and the batter are out.
- 1.6 At the time of the pitch, *the infielders must be no more than three feet in front of the baseline*. Outfielders must be positioned in the outfield (grass), infielders on the gravel.
- 1.7 **In the event LIGHTNING is spotted, ALL DIAMONDS MUST BE CLEARED IMMEDIATELY!!** (Game is complete if four innings have been completed.) In addition, **If the National Weather Service issues a TORNADO WARNING PRIOR TO THE START OF A GAME and/or PRACTICE, ALL ACTIVITIES ARE CANCELLED!**

- 1.8 The first-aid kits must be present at the diamonds **before** the start of play (games and practices). If anything is used from the first-aid kits during play, the home manager must inform the equipment manager so it can be replaced. *Managers and Coaches should be the only ones using the first aid kits.*
- 1.9 All base runners, batters, on deck batters, and players acting as base coaches must wear helmets during games.
- 1.10 No jewelry, except for stud earrings or small hoops, allowed.
- 1.11 Long hair must be pulled back and be kept off the face.

2.0 Conduct

ALL participants in Devon-Aire Softball activities agree to abide by the Conduct Rules in this section.

- All Players, Managers and Coaches
 - All Spectators including all relatives or friends of players, managers and coaches
- 2.1 Players, managers, coaches and spectators shall show good sportsmanship and conduct. The manager is responsible for the conduct of his/her team and fans. This rule does not restrict chatter in “good taste”. Players are not allowed to tell a batter to “swing”.
 - 2.2 No swearing will be allowed
 - 2.3 No smoking will be allowed
 - 2.4 No speeding or squealing of tires in the parking lot.
 - 2.5 No rude, derogatory, or insulting comments will be directed at teammates, opponents, coaches, umpires or spectators.
 - 2.6 No questioning/arguing of umpire’s calls.
 - 2.7 No questioning or backtalk of decisions made by managers/coaches regarding position placement or batting order.
 - 2.8 No throwing of any equipment (i.e. bats, helmets, etc.) will be tolerated.
 - 2.9 Failure to adhere to the above requirements will result a disciplinary process:
 1. Manager speaks directly to player involved
 2. Manager speaks to players’ parent
 3. Manager informs Commissioner and League President
 4. Commissioner and/or President speak to player
 5. Reduction of playing time
 6. Suspension from team for one game
 7. Suspension from league for rest of the year
 8. Suspended individuals may request reinstatement at a formal review meeting with the full league board. A vote by the full board is required.

- 2.10 Any deliberate destruction of Devon-Aire Softball or Livonia Public School property will be grounds for fines and/or suspension.
- 2.11 No violence of any kind will be tolerated and will result in immediate suspension, without benefit of the 7 step disciplinary process.
- 2.11 A. Physical - Intentional or confrontational pushing, tripping, spitting, punching, slapping, or any other form of violent/abusive contact with another person(s) on the field of play or at a league sponsored activity.
- 2.11 B. Verbal - Threats by an individual to use any foreign object violently such as bats, balls, helmets, etc. will be considered an act of violence. An individual threatening to use a foreign object violently does not have to actually carry out the act for it to be considered an act of violence.

3.0 General Procedures

- 3.1 To be eligible to play in the Junior Division, a player must be at least 7 years old on June 1st, and no older than 12 on June 1st.
- 3.1a To be eligible for the Coach Pitch division a player must be between 4-7 on June 1st. Exceptions may be made for a few reasons: if the Junior Boys league does not run, 7 year old boys are permitted to play, and 7 year old girls if they have another Coach Pitch sibling.
- 3.1b 6 yr old boys may go to Jr's in order for Jr Boys to run.
- 3.2 To be eligible to play in the Senior Division, a player must be in the 7th grade and be at least 12 years old on June 1st, and no older than 18 and a high school senior on June 1st.
- 3.3 All coaches will be directly responsible for equipment issued to their team.
- 3.4 Only league officers or designated committee chairpersons are to deal with suppliers (trophies, photographers, uniforms, etc.). No unauthorized person should order for the league, alter an existing order, nor expect financial reimbursement for any personal expense not approved in advance by the league officer in charge. Any questions or problems a coach has with any supplier must be directed through a league officer.
- 3.5 Each team must have an adult manager or assistant coach present for each game. Adults must be at least 19 years of age in the Junior Division, and 21 years of age in the Senior Division. An adult must be in charge of all games. **Only authorized players, managers, coaches, and umpires shall be allowed on the field.** In the event the coach does not show up for the game, a coach from the opposing team must coach until the missing coach arrives, or until the game is completed. **ALL GAMES MUST BE PLAYED EVEN IF IT HAS NO BEARING ON THE STANDINGS!** (Exception: if no dates are available for make-ups, games will be eliminated)
- 3.6 Practices will be a maximum of 90 minutes and **only on the days scheduled by the League.** Possible make-up dates for rained-out practices to be scheduled by the Division Commissioner.
- 3.7 No official practices will be held (preseason) prior to the first scheduled practice of the season.

- 3.8 Any protest of a game must be made at the game to the opposing manager (or coach in absence of manager). Any protest of a game must be given to the Protest Committee within 48 hours of the game in writing, and must be accompanied with \$25.00. If the protest is found to be valid in accordance with the **current ASA rules AND the Devon-Aire Softball League rules**, the money shall be returned. If not, the money shall go into the League's general fund.
- 3.9 Rain-outs that are not complete games (four complete innings) will be made up on League rain-out days established. **Managers will be notified 1 hour before game time if the division commissioner, or official designated by the commissioner, cancels the games.** If no notification is received, teams need to report to the fields at game time where managers will decide together if the field is playable.
- 3.10 The final score is to be reported to the commissioner by the **winning team manager**, preferably the same day as the game.
- 3.11 The Protest Committee for the Junior Girls Division is comprised of the **opposite Senior Commissioner**, and all the **team managers** of the ~~opposite league~~ Senior division. The Protest Committee for the Senior Division is comprised of the **Boy's and Girl's Commissioners and three team managers chosen by lottery from the Junior Division.** The **President of the League** is also a member of all protest committees unless he/she are directly involved in the dispute. In the event that any manager or commissioner is directly involved in the protest he/she will excuse him/herself from the committee.
- 3.12 The President is elected for a two year term. Current President may be re-elected.
- 3.13 EXECUTIVE BOARD CONSISTS OF (10) OFFICERS – One person, one vote:
- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| President | Sponsor Chairperson |
| Vice-President/Secretary | Uniform Chairperson |
| Treasurer | Equipment Chairperson |
| Commissioners (3) (2) in 2015 (Jr. Boys) | Fields Chairperson |
- Coach Pitch reports under Jr Girls**
- 3.13a **By 2015 season end, there will be a Coach Pitch and Jr Boys Commissioner, making total commissioner 4.**
- 3.14 **STANDING COMMITTEES:** will consist of Picnic Committee, Trophy Committee
- 3.15 **Schedule of Meetings:** all board members, managers and coaches are invited
August: Fact-finding (post season)
Jan./Feb.: Election of officers
March: Registration and Drafts
April: Budget & Rules Review
- 3.16 One division cannot dictate policy for the entire league without a full meeting of all managers from all divisions of the league. A quorum is necessary for the Jan/Feb meeting that is 75% of all managers and coaches present or represented by proxy. Those voting by proxy will be given the slate of candidates for the Executive Board positions.

- 3.17 Changing of ratings at the drafts will be allowed with a consensus of ALL managers. All team drafts will be conducted using the rating system of players, not only their ages, to attempt to ensure parity of all the teams in each division.
- 3.18 All problems within a division must go to that Commissioner and follow complaint procedure:
- A. If a parent or coach calls the Commissioner, the Commissioner will first ask if the parent has spoken to the Manager.
 - B. Commissioner then contacts the Manager or Coach
 - C. If not resolved, Commissioner then calls a Division Meeting.
 - D. Executive Board is called only if no resolution is reached by Division
- 3.19 No manager or coach can call a meeting. Division Meetings must be called by a Commissioner. Executive Board Meetings may only be called by the President. Any league member can request a meeting.
- 3.20 Meetings held during the season. . . Managers and coaches should be present. They can inform parents of any pertinent information.
- 3.21 If any coach or manager resigns during the season, they may not hold office or manage/coach again in the league for two years. Extenuating circumstances such as a change in job status, injury, illness, etc. render this rule not applicable.
- 3.22 No refunds will be given to players quitting after registration.
- 3.23 Each team has only one manager and three coaches (three coach shirts will be issued). If a coach is absent, a parent may be a base coach only for that game. Coach Pitch may have more due to guidance needs of the younger players.
- 3.24 While all comments are encouraged, voting is by the executive board, managers and, at times coaches.
- 3.25 Requirements and limitations for new members:
- * New members may coach in their first year, but are prohibited from managing.
(*Exception: If there is a special need, a new member may be made a probationary manager pending approval by the executive board*)
 - * No new member may be the President or a Commissioner
 - * Access to other board positions is limited and must have board approval.

4.0 Picnic Procedures

- 4.1 Trophy Committee shall consist of at least four people:
- The Commissioners and the President
 - Any league staff member can be chairperson of the Trophy Committee
- 4.2 Only trophies authorized by the League and its officers are permitted at the All-Star Picnic.
- 4.3 In all three divisions, all players will receive a trophy.
- 4.5 Each Junior Division All-Star team will award 1 MVP Trophy (4 Total). Each Senior All-Star team will award 2 MVP Trophies, 1 to the girl MVP and 1 to the boy MVP (4 total).

- 4.5a Coach Pitch MVP award to be determined prior to All Star Game.
- 4.6 All-Star MVPs for both teams will be chosen by the combined votes of the All-Star Managers with input from the play-by-play announcer.
- 4.7 Each team will choose all but two of its All-Stars by vote of the players. Team coaches will make the final two selections to fill out the roster.

Players must have played in majority of the scheduled games to be eligible for All-Stars. Managers are responsible for keeping track of the number of games played by each player.

- 4.8 The number of players selected from each team will be based on the following:

If a division has **3 teams, 8 players** from each team will be All-Stars.

If a division has **4 teams, 7 players** from each team will be All-Stars.

If a division has **5 teams, 6 players** from each team will be All-Stars.

If a division has **6 teams, 5 players** from each team will be All-Stars.

4.8a All-Star teams will be a combined team with the first and last place teams being combined, and the second and third place teams being combined.

4.8b If there are an odd number of teams in a division, the last place team will be split. A meeting of the Managers and Commissioner in that division will decide how they players will be split. Deference will be given to the affected manager.

4.8c For the Coach Pitch League, in their inaugural season they have two teams and will play a scrimmage on the morning of the All Star Game

- 4.9 No substitutions or alternate All-Stars are allowed.
- 4.10 First All-Star Game will be Coach Pitch, 2nd Game Junior Girls, 3rd Junior Boys, then the Seniors.
- 4.11 Trophy presentation will be in order of games played, with all raffles conducted after trophy presentations.
- 4.12 Trophies will be presented by team in order of regular season standings; First place presented first, second place next, and so on.
- 4.13 Schedule for All-Star program information to be determined by the President (player bios, fielding diagrams, line-ups, etc.).
- 4.14 Each regular season team will be responsible for providing a “theme basket” to be raffled at the picnic. Each manager may decide what method to use in creating their themed basket – by monetary collection from team members to purchase basket items or donations in kind from player families.
- 4.15 All-Star games and picnic to be conducted on the last Saturday in July.

5.0 Game Procedures

- 5.1 Umpires must be at least 16 years old to work Junior Division games; 19 years old to work Senior Division games. Coach Pitch have scrimmages so they need no umpires at first but will transition to umpires by season's end.
- 5.2 Managers and coaches are responsible for alternate inning umpiring duties (1,3,5, or 2,4,6). **Any complaints should be reported to the appropriate division commissioner immediately after the game.**
- 5.3 Baselines will be 50 feet long in the Coach Pitch and Junior Division and 55 feet long in the Senior Division.

The guideline for the pitching distance will be around 20 Feet for Coach Pitch, 28-35 ft in the Junior Division, and 40 ft in the Senior Division. Players cannot end their pitching motion any closer to home plate than – 28' in Juniors and 40' in Seniors.

Teams are required to draw chalk line or visible line in the dirt at the 28' mark for Juniors and the 40' mark for Seniors to avoid pitchers being too close to batters, for the pitcher's safety.

- 5.4 Home team will take the third base side.
- 5.5 All league games are 6 innings in duration.
 - 5.5a Game times are 6:00-7:00pm for Coach Pitch, 6PM for Seniors and 6:30pm for Juniors.
 - 5.5b A 15 minute grace period is granted before a forfeit is called.
 - 5.5c In the Junior Division, when school is in session, no new inning shall begin after 8:00 PM. If four innings have been completed, the game is over. If less than four innings have been completed, the game is rescheduled and started over.
 - 5.5d In the event of a tie at 8:00 before school is out, the next time these two teams play **after school is out**, the tie game will be completed first (with the lineup they had at that time) (sudden death at the completion of an inning), and then the regularly scheduled game will be played.
- 5.6 The **visiting team** has the field from 30-15 minutes prior to the game. The **home team** has the field 15 minutes prior to the game. (Jr's and Sr's)
- 5.7 A Jr team must start a game with a minimum of eight players, but may finish with less, due to injury, illness, or disqualification. When a team has less than nine players, the opposing team will provide a catcher. However, fielding plays must be handled by the fielding team.
 - 5.7a A Senior team may start a game with a minimum of seven players; at least two of whom must be a girl.

5.71 Coach Pitch Games will go as follows for the 2014 Season- The Coach Pitch games will transition from Exhibition to Standard Games by the end of the season. Timeline is pending.

- 5.8 Only players assigned to a team may play for that team. If any unauthorized players participate, that game must be considered a forfeit. A list of players, and their numbers, in batting order must be available prior to the start of the game to the opposing team. **Any complaints shall be reported to the commissioner immediately.**
- 5.9 Batting order shall be arranged so that the entire team roster has a turn at bat, whether or not the player is presently playing in the field.
- 5.9a In the Senior Division, batting order will alternate by gender.
- 5.10 A late arriving player should be placed at the bottom of the batting order, and the opposing coaches should be informed of the additional player immediately.
[Sr rule about alternating gender is removed]
- 5.11 All players must be allowed to participate in each game for at least half of the game in the field. Violation of this rule may constitute a forfeit. Decision of Protest Committee will be final. This rule must be adhered to in extra inning games (i.e. if a game goes a 7th or 8th inning, each player must play at least one inning.) This includes the All-Star game.

6.0 Game Rules

- 6.1 No bunting is allowed.
- 6.2 No intentional walks allowed. Umpire's Discretion.
- 6.3 No player is allowed to lead off from any base and will be called out if they do so. No stealing of bases is allowed; relaxed step is allowed. Relaxed step is defined as a runner pulled off base at the **swing of the bat**. Runner is out if they try to advance without the ball being hit.
- 6.4 **In the Junior Division**, the ball is dead and the runners may not advance when the pitcher has possession of the ball in the pitching circle (10' diameter) around the mound.
 - 6.4a It is recommended that a 10' diameter chalk circle be drawn around the mound to aid umpires in calling the ball dead. It is the Umpire's Discretion to call the play dead even not within the 10'.
- 6.5 A foul ball may not be called a third strike.
- 6.6 Overthrows at 1st or 3rd are one base. Overthrows to 2nd are in play.
- 6.7 There will be no limit to the number of times a coach may talk to his pitcher.
- 6.8 Pitchers may be rotated at the end of any inning and may return to pitch again. There is no limit to the number of innings a pitcher may pitch.
- 6.9 Shifting of players to different positions, except for the following reasons will not be allowed **during** an inning:
 - 6.9a If a batter is hurt while batting and can't continue the batting team may skip to the next batter. The injured batter is not out and may return later.
 - 6.9b A defensive player removed in the middle of an inning due to an injury may return later. This includes the pitcher. A pitcher removed in the middle of an inning, without an injury, may NOT return to pitch later.
- 6.10 **Pitches must be a slow lob-** In the Junior Division, with a four to ten foot arc from the point of release. In the Senior Division, with an arc of six to twelve feet from the point of release.
- 6.11 Only official softball bats are allowed to be used. **All bats during a game must be shared by both teams including personal bats.** All bats must be taped or have grips.

Personal Batting Helmets or Personal Catcher Head Gear is not required to be shared between players for hygiene reasons. Players should be instructed not to use other teammates personal head gear.
- 6.12 There is no infield fly rule in the Junior Division.
- 6.13 In the Senior Division, every defensive inning, a team must have a minimum of three girls playing defensive positions not including catcher.

- 6.14 In the Senior Division, a team is not allowed to put a player into the catcher position for more than three innings per game. This position should be shared equally by boys and girls.
- 6.15 **RUN AHEAD RULE:** 20 after four innings or 15 after five innings. Complete innings must be played unless the home team scores the run-ahead limit while batting. The game is officially over at this point and this score stands. Teams may agree to continue playing “for practice.”
- 6.15 b Per Inning Cap-**
- Junior Division 5 Runs Scored Hard Cap**
- Upon the scoring of the 5th run in any half inning, the half inning is immediately over.
 - **LAST Inning-** Either 5 run cap (if batting team is ahead OR if they are down by less than 4) or it is the amount they are down plus one so they may take a one run lead if behind by more than 5.
 - Example- Top of 6, team losing 9-7 scores 5 to take a 12-9 lead.
 - Example- Top of 6, team losing 10-3, scores 8 to take 11-10 lead.
 - Example- Top of 6, team winning 5-1 scores 5 max. for a 10-1 lead.
- 6.16 Warm-up pitches between innings are limited to five. Managers and coaches need to have catcher ready to get into gear quickly while warm ups are happening, so game continues quickly.
- 6.17 Managers or Coaches while they are umpiring are no longer managers/coaches unless the regular manager or coach is absent. Instructional assistance is permitted.
- 6.18 **GROUND RULE DOUBLE:** When playing on Diamond #3, when a batted ball makes contact with the parking lot, the church, or the landscaping around the church, the umpire will automatically rule a double be awarded to the batter. Base runners may advance two bases from their previous location. This rule is in effect whether the batted ball hits the obstruction “on the fly” or when rolling or bouncing. Players must make a reasonable effort to play a rolling or bouncing ball before it enters the parking lot.

Addendum to the Devon-Aire Rules

(All references pertain to the 2012 ASA Rule Book)

These ASA rules have been included at the end of our rules to avoid the yearly confusion in three areas: Obstruction, Interference and Balls & Strikes.

Obstruction (page 28 of ASA Rule Book): The act of a defensive team member:

- A. Who hinders or impedes a batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball
- B. Who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running the bases unless the fielder is:
 - a. In possession of the ball
 - b. In the act of fielding a batted ball

NOTE: Contact is not necessary to impede the progress of the batter-runner or a runner.

Obstruction is the act of a fielder:

- 1. Not in possession of the ball,
- 2. Not in the act of fielding a batted ball, or
- 3. Not about to receive a thrown ball

which impedes the progress of a batter-runner or runner who is legally running the bases. In defining “not about to receive a thrown ball,” the ball must be between the advancing runner and the defensive player about to make the catch and play. If the ball is outside this area and contact occurs, obstruction is ruled. If the ball is within this area and contact occurs, it is neither obstruction nor interference and the ball remains live.

If a defensive person is blocking the base or base path without (or not about to receive) the ball, this is impeding the progress of the runner and is obstruction.

If the defense is reaching for a thrown ball, the runner has a clear lane to the base and the runner contacts the defender while on his feet, this would be interference on the runner in most cases. A legal slide would not be interference.

Interference (page 28 of ASA Rule Book): Interference is defined as the act of an offensive player or team member, umpire or spectator that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. Physical contact is not necessary; it may be in the form of verbal distraction, visual distraction, or any type of distraction including physical contact that would hinder the fielder in the execution of the play. Defensive players must be given the opportunity to field the ball anywhere on the playing field or throw the ball without being hindered.

Please read the following sections at least once prior to the season:

Runner interference - page 93-94 J,K,L,P,Q

On-deck batter interference – page 77

Coach’s interference – page 94 M,O

Umpire interference – page 92 6-F

Batter interference – page 82 P-S

Batter-Runner interference – page 84 E-H

Spectator interference – 86 N, 91 L

Strike Zone

The strike zone is defined as such: When a batter assumes a natural batting stance adjacent to home, the strike zone is that space over any part of home plate between the batter’s back shoulder, and the front knee. (ASA Rule 1, page 30)

A ball is called by the umpire:

For each legally pitched ball that does not enter the strike zone, touches the ground before reaching home plate, or touches home plate, and the batter does not swing. Any pitched ball that hits the ground or plate cannot be legally swung at by the batter. **If the batter swings at a pitch AFTER the ball hits the ground or plate, it is a ball.** (ASA Rule 7, Sec 5, B slow pitch)

